

**Amendments to the Claims:**

Per 37 C.F.R. §1.121, the current status of all the claims in the present application is presented below, amended claims are notated to indicated changes made and the text of pending claims not being amended are presented clean. Amendments to the following are indicated by underlining what has been added and striking-through what has been deleted.

This listing of the claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

**Listing of Claims:**

1. (Canceled)
2. (Previously presented) The method of claim 11 wherein the delivery vehicle is powdered bone, tricalcium phosphate, hydroxyapatite, polymethacrylate, a biodegradable polyester, an aqueous polymeric gel, or a fibrin sealant.
3. (Previously presented) The method of claim 11 wherein the composition is locally administered at a site of a bony defect.
4. (Original) The method of claim 3 wherein the bony defect is a fracture, bone graft site, implant site, or periodontal pocket.
5. (Previously presented) The method of claim 11 wherein the composition is administered systemically.
6. (Previously presented) The method of claim 11 wherein the dimeric protein is covalently linked to a bone-targeting agent.
7. (Previously presented) The method of claim 11 wherein the composition is locally administered at a joint.
8. (Previously presented) The method of claim 11 wherein the composition further comprises a protein selected from the group consisting of insulin-like

growth factor 1, platelet-derived growth factor, epidermal growth factor, transforming growth factor-alpha, transforming growth factor-beta, a bone morphogenetic protein, parathyroid hormone, osteoprotegerin, a fibroblast growth factor, and a protein comprising residues 258-370 of SEQ ID NO:5.

9. (Previously presented) The method of claim 11 wherein the protein is a homodimer.

10. (Canceled)

11. (Previously presented) A method for promoting growth of bone, ligament, or cartilage in a mammal comprising administering to said mammal a composition comprising:

a pharmacologically effective amount of a dimeric protein comprising a first polypeptide chain disulfide bonded to a second polypeptide chain, each of said chains consisting of residues X-345 of SEQ ID NO:2, wherein X is an integer from 226 to 235, inclusive; and

a pharmaceutically acceptable delivery vehicle.

12-21. (Canceled)

22. (Previously presented) A method for stimulating proliferation of osteoblasts or chondrocytes in a mammal comprising administering to the mammal a composition comprising:

a pharmacologically effective amount of a dimeric protein comprising a first polypeptide chain disulfide bonded to a second polypeptide chain, each of said chains consisting of residues X-345 of SEQ ID NO:2, wherein X is an integer from 226 to 235, inclusive; and

a pharmaceutically acceptable delivery vehicle.

23. (Original) The method of claim 22 wherein the delivery vehicle is powdered bone, tricalcium phosphate, hydroxyapatite, polymethacrylate, a biodegradable polyester, an aqueous polymeric gel, or a fibrin sealant.

24. (Previously presented) The method of claim 22 wherein the protein is covalently linked to a bone-targeting agent.

25. (Original) The method of claim 22 wherein the composition further comprises a protein selected from the group consisting of insulin-like growth factor 1, platelet-derived growth factor, epidermal growth factor, transforming growth factor-alpha, transforming growth factor-beta, a bone morphogenetic protein, parathyroid hormone, osteoprotegerin, a fibroblast growth factor, and a protein comprising residues 258-370 of SEQ ID NO:5.

26. (Canceled)